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Fate of chemistry branch libraries: Onward toward 2015

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Fate of Chemistry Branch Libraries: Onward toward 2015

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Today's Talk

- Background
 - Implementation of the survey
 - Results
 - Conclusions
- and some tips along the way...

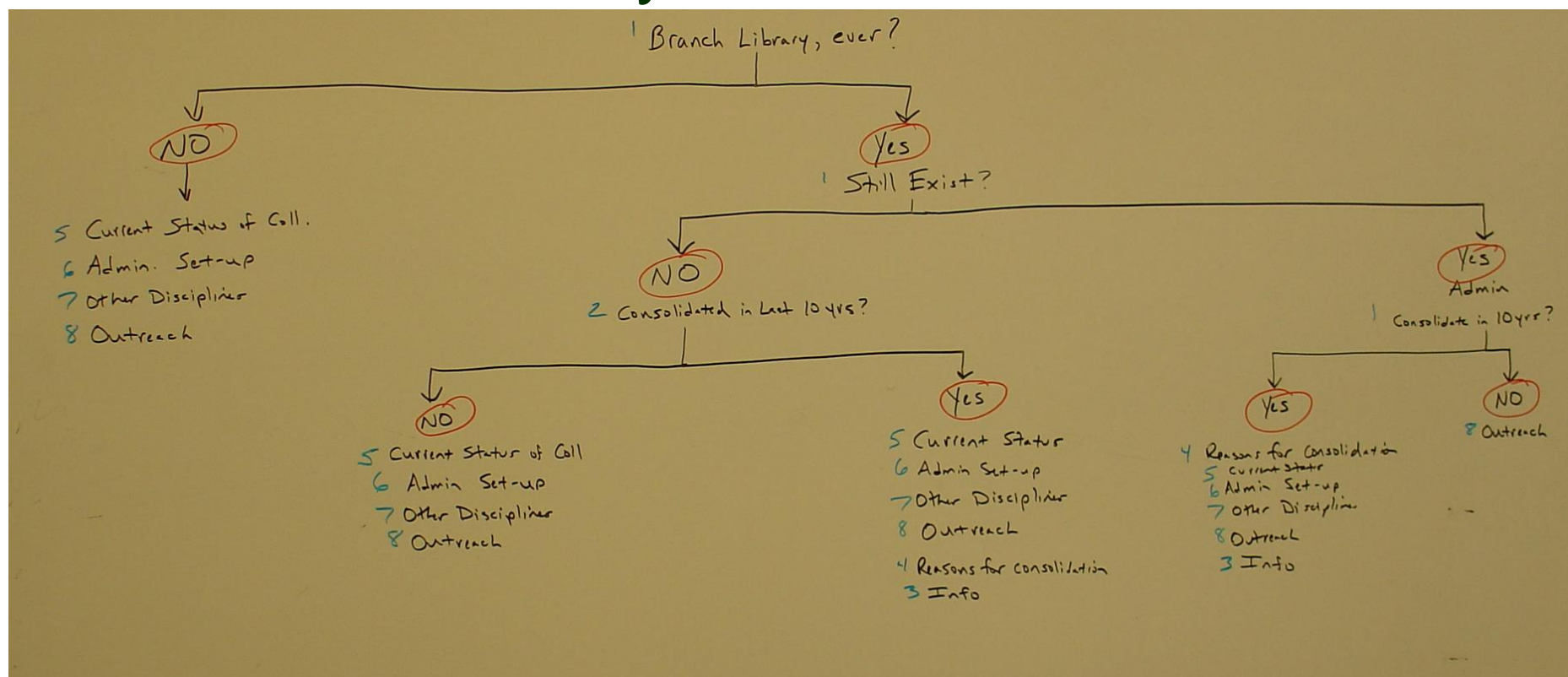


Why do this survey?

- Chemistry Enterprise 2015
- Nothing similar out there / Curiosity
- Purdue is considering combining libraries
- Others are interested in the results

Structure of the Survey

- Modified questions from ACRL Survey
- Decision tree style





Implementation of the Survey

- Paper surveys sent to Deans/Directors of 113 ARL institutions
 - Excluded non-academic ARL institutions
 - Surveyed Canadian academic institutions
 - Simultaneous “heads-up” from my Dean at ARL Directors Meeting
- Email reminder after a month and a half with survey as attachment



Where will chemistry libraries be in 2015?

- In 2015, only half of existing chemistry libraries in ARL institutions will still exist as they are today
- Many varieties of consolidation
- With interdisciplinary research and improved efficiency major factors in consolidation, opportunities arise for many library systems



Status of Chemistry Libraries?

- Response: 85 institutions out of 113 (75%)
- How many have EVER had a chem library?
 - 44 institutions (52%)
- How many exist today?
 - 19 institutions (22%)



Rates of Closure/Consolidation?

- Of the 25 that have ceased to exist, 6 have done so in the last 10 years
- In the next 10 years, of the 19 that are left, 7 will cease to exist



In 10 years, who is left?

- And another 3 out of 19 will most likely be decreased in size.
- Leaving 9 chemistry libraries “unchanged”
 - Conversely, a little over half of all existing Chemistry Libraries in ARL institutions will see some change in the next ten years. (Most of it significant.)

What **were** the reasons for change?

Last 10 years (n = 6), 2 or more responses

	# of Institutions
Improve efficiency	4
↑ Interdisciplinary research	4
Reduce staffing costs	3
Insufficient staff for chem lib	3
↑ Space for chem collection	3
Chem dept needed space	2
To offer new services	2
↑ Hours of service	2
Best way to upgrade tech	2
Reorganization of admin structure	2

What **are** the reasons for change?

Next 10 years (n = 6), 2 or more responses

	# of Institutions
To offer new services	4
Improve efficiency	4
↑ Interdisciplinary research	4
Reduce staffing costs	3
↑ Hours of service	3
Decline in on-site usage	2
Best way to upgrade tech	2
To improve visibility	2
Changes in library's mission	2

What are the reasons for change?

Combined (n = 12), 4 or more responses

	# of Institutions
Improve efficiency	8
↑ Interdisciplinary research	8
Reduce staffing costs	6
To offer new services	6
↑ Hours of service	5
Insufficient staff for chem lib	4
Best way to upgrade tech	4



What was unique in the last 10 years?

- To increase space for the chemistry collection (3 institutions said it then)



What is unique in the **next** 10 years?

- Changes to the library's/libraries' mission
(2 institutions)
- Changes to the university's mission
(1 institution)

No institution said:

- To increase usage of the chemistry collection
- To decrease the size of the chemistry collection

How were/will they be funded?

	Last 10 Yrs n = 4	Next 10 Yrs n = 4	Combined n = 8
No funding	1	0	1
Bonds	1	1	2
Endowments	0	0	0
Private Donors	3	2	5
Corporate Donors	2	1	3
Government	3	2	5



Where did they go the last 10 yrs?

- 1 was consolidated into a new building
- 3 were consolidated into an existing building
 - 2 into a central/main library
 - 1 into an existing natural sciences library
- 2 were consolidated into an existing building with additional renovation/expansion
 - 1 was formerly the Humanities and Social Sciences Library after it received a new building
 - 1 was formerly the Undergraduate Library, both now occupy the same building, but physically separated



Where are the chem libraries going?

- 4 will be consolidated into a new building
- 2 will be consolidated into an existing building
 - 1 into a central/main library
 - 1 into an existing natural sciences library
- 1 will be consolidated into an existing building with additional renovation/expansion



Current status of chemistry collections

- 19 separate chemistry libraries (22%)
- Housed in central sci/tech library (40%) with:
 - 17 – **No** other sci/tech libraries present
 - 5 – **Independent** sci/tech libraries present
 - 7 – **Reporting** sci/tech libraries present
 - 5 – **Reporting and Independent** sci/tech libraries present



Current status of chemistry collections

- Housed in a central library (26%)
 - 2 – But physically **separated** within the library
 - 10 – With **no** other sci/tech libraries present
 - 10 – **With** other sci/tech libraries present
- 10 “Other” (12%) — Half are combination libraries:
1 Chem/Math, 1 Chem/Bio, 3 Chem/Phys



Subject / Collection Pairings

Top 5

Subject	# of Institutions
Physics	60
Astronomy	54
Biology/Life Sciences	53
Earth Sciences	53
Environmental Sciences	52



Subject / Collection Pairings

Bottom 5*

Subject	# of Institutions
Veterinary Medicine	6
Forestry	16
Nursing	16
Ocean Engineering	17
Pharmacy/Pharmacology	18

* 16 Institutions did choose “Other” and give additional subjects



Lessons Learned

- Expansion/consolidation can be tied to the construction of a storage facility (2 instances)
- Important to keep support staff involved and informed
- New services offered/considered: Book and article delivery service, transitional office hours while library is constructed, improved web presence, rotating new book shelf within each department.



Benefits Realized

- Integration of journals into book collection
- Consolidated journal runs
- Library could be open “110 hrs vs. 40 hrs + keys”
- Access and Technical Services policies, roles, and staff can be shared
- Department may want some of your space right away, but moving in stages is a good thing



Where do we go from here?

- With proliferation of online resources and considerations of space usage, focus on:
 - Instruction
 - Outreach
 - New services
- Be prepared for significant changes ahead...
 - ...& learn from those who have gone before us.